

# The Surface Pass

Downloadable Trick Tips

## The Surface Pass

The surface pass is simple and one of the first unhooked moves you must work on to build confidence and muscle memory.

### Prerequisites for this trick are

- Knowing how to unhook
- Relaunching the kite
- Riding toeside
- Riding upwind

What's great about this is that it can be done in light wind even when it's too light to pop. As kiteboarders, we can never get enough water time and this trick will keep you entertained when it's too light for anything else.

I recommend incorporating these into every session until you're landing your first air pass like the blind judge or at least every session until you are consistent with the Raley to blind.

Something I want to push with this fundamentals playlist is that high-level tricks are nothing more than repetition of the basics. The more time you spend doing these drills, the more comfortable you'll be holding the blind riding position. This will prepare you for not only passing but landing blind later on.

## Deliberate Practice

Before we break this down, I wanted to write about deliberate practice. You've probably heard of the 10,000-hour rule for mastery. There's much more to the story. You can accelerate learning by focusing on a specific aspect of your craft. Visualization from videos helps too!

## Trick Overview

Try your first surface passes on your heelside tack. I recommend passing to blind with your front hand. You'll be doing a backside spin.

Park the kite at 45 degrees. remove your harness pin and split the bar with your middle and index finger. Ride downwind towards the kite and unhook.

## Continued

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Pull the bar into your lead hip and look over your back shoulder. Your body and board will start to spin.

A few things need to happen at the same time. First make sure you bring your front arm and the control bar around your back. Spin the bar so that the back of your hand touches the small of your back.

At the same time, pay attention to the edge of your board. As you start to spin shift your weight from your heels to your toes. At the point your weight should be on your toeside edge, The kite should be behind you and your arm should be tucked into the small of your back.

Keep looking over your shoulder and pass the bar to the other hand. As you spin around you'll want to shift your weight back from your toes to your heels. You can swing your hips towards the kite as you do this. After you complete the rotation, hook back in and start to edge upwind.

### **Body awareness**

Treat your body as a unit. If you have ever practice a board sport, you know to keep your shoulders, hips, and knees in line with the tip and tail of your board. Keep a strong upright posture and focus on what you feel.

Feel the shift of balance as you shift the weight from heelside to toeside and vice versa. Feel the pull of the kite as you ride downwind. Be mindful of the control bar as you rotate your hand into the small of your back. Make sure you look where you are going. The body follows your head and line of sight.

Visualization goes a long way. Watch the video and practice the move in your house. Try it on the water and think about it after your session. They have done studies that prove mental practice paired with real experience is almost as good as real practice. It goes a long way!

Effectively, the mind gets better at communicating with the muscles. It sounds crazy but there have been many tricks, I failed at. practiced in my mind and landed my first attempt months later. Some I visualized so much I somehow managed to land immediately. Granted, It still took work to get them consistent after the fact.

I mention this because these drills are the perfect example of visualizing and technically practicing your first handle passes.

## Continued

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#### Next steps

Learn this both ways and both tacks. One tack is going to feel much more natural than the other. You may as well get used to doing this on your opposite tack and rotation right away.

Not only should you learn to do this on both tacks, you should learn to spin backside and frontside. In the trick overview, we covered the backside spin.

To spin frontside, ride toeside and unhook. Look over your back shoulder and pass the bar just like before. The only difference is you are spinning the other direction. This might feel a little weird the first attempt. Remember to start toeside and ride downwind. Repeat all the previous steps.

#### Frontside spins

These will lead to a lot of new progressions in your riding. Starting with the Raley to wrapped, the 313, 315 and beyond. It will also be useful when you pair these rotations in the air after a front or back roll.

A good example here would be the Back Mobe. This is a back roll with a frontside 360 spin. If you feel comfortable passing on the water, that progression will come easier.

#### Backside spins

The blind pass will teach you the fundamentals behind the Blind judge, the BJ3 and beyond. Again, if you pair these in the air with rolls, you will be landing more advanced tricks like the KGB. A backroll with a backside 360.

You'll thank yourself later if you practice these surfaces passes more than the karate kid waxed on and waxed off.

## Continued

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#### Common mistakes

- Not riding downwind enough
- Letting the bar get away from you
- Holding an edge

The biggest mistake on this trick is trying to ride upwind or even across to the wind when doing the pass. You need to be riding downwind and at the kite. It's going to be difficult to initiate the spin when holding down a strong edge.

This will load tension into the lines and the kite will pull away from you or worse, pull you on an edge. Commit to the rotation completely by looking over that shoulder. The body always follows the head. Chances are, you'll be riding downwind more than you expect or desire. Get used to it. That's part of unhooked riding.

#### Keep the bar close

The other big mistake is letting the bar get away from you. This is the most common mistake in more advanced tricks as well. Get into the habit of keeping the bar close to your hips right away. It's a great idea and necessary for this drill.

Practice this every session. Even if you can sometimes land blind, this will help a lot. Especially practice if the wind is too light to pop. You can double your water time by making the most of sup 13-knot conditions with this drill. Spend a few hours mastering this. When the time comes to learn more advanced spins and linking things together, it's going to feel natural and easy.